

## ***Moving Forward with the Great California Delta Trail***

### **July 2011**

Senate Bill 1556 (Senator Torlakson) signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in September 2006, directed that the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) prepare a plan for the Great California Delta Trail (Delta Trail) System:

*...the Commission shall develop and adopt a plan and implementation program, including a finance and maintenance plan, for a continuous regional recreational corridor that will extend around the ...delta, including, but not limited to, the delta's shorelines in Contra Costa, Solano, San Joaquin, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties. This plan shall link the San Francisco Bay Trail system to the planned Sacramento River trails in Yolo and Sacramento Counties. This plan shall include a specific route of a bicycling and hiking trail, the relationship of the route to existing and proposed park and recreational facilities and land and water trail systems, and links to existing and proposed public transportation and transit.*

#### **Work Completed**

Blueprint Reports had been identified as the first step, prior to developing a master plan for the Delta Trail system. These reports were completed for Contra Costa and Solano Counties and approved by the Commission in September 2010. The process included the development of Technical and Stakeholder Advisory Committees (TAC and SAC, respectively) for the Blueprint Reports to be developed utilizing local interests and expertise. A Blueprint Report was recently adopted by the Solano County Board of Supervisors, and Commission staff is working to obtain adoption by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

#### **Next Steps**

Development of a Blueprint Report for Sacramento, San Joaquin and Yolo Counties is being initiated by Commission staff, using the completed Blueprint Report for Contra Costa and Solano Counties as a model. As part of this process, TAC and SAC will be developed for each county, and workshops will be held in each county to develop the visions and goals. Research will be done on existing policies and settings that are specific to each county, and GIS mapping will be conducted on existing planned and proposed trails in each county.

Throughout development of the Blueprint Reports and subsequent Master Planning Processes, Commission staff will work closely with local governments, as well as representatives from diverse groups in each county including habitat, agriculture, business, and recreation organizations, to ensure that Delta Trail planning is closely aligned with the varied interests, capabilities and infrastructure of each county. Existing public lands will be identified as key places for Delta Trail implementation. The Commission does not support the use of eminent domain, and tools such as fee purchases, easements, licenses and MOUs can be explored to acquire property access in relevant areas, with the consent and involvement of willing landowners. Water trails will also be a key component of the Delta Trail system, and can be a viable option to ensure trail continuity in places where land trails are not feasible, however sensitive habitat and wildlife areas will not be adversely affected by the trail. Buffer zones will be implemented between the trail and places with sensitive wildlife habitat and private uses.

Work on the Blueprint Reports for Sacramento, San Joaquin and Yolo Counties is expected to begin soon, and Commission staff will provide regular updates on the progress.